

"A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices...
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother, and in his name,
ALL OPPRESSION SHALL CEASE"

Advent, a word that means "arrival," announces that the powers which deform life, do not have the final word. Liberation is not only a distant hope but a reality breaking into the present, heralded like a dawn by a star that appears in the night sky, guiding the world toward what it cannot yet fully see but already begins to trust.

O Come Immanuel...Not as nostalgia. Not as abstraction. But as a refusal to settle. As a longing that becomes action. As a hope that has already begun to break open in the present.
The weary world rejoices because the future of God is not waiting at the end of history. It is not a separate space, secluded from the world God so loves. It is here.

We stand now on the receiving end of a glorious and challenging invitation: to welcome our Savior, to receive the gift of God's coming future, and, in the present moment, be drawn into participation with the unfolding advent of justice and restoration.

Share in the season of Advent and Christmas at Bethlehem!

Sunday worship with Communion each week
8:55am – **Worship** (in-person and livestream)
10:15am – **Fellowship** Enjoy a treat and conversation each Sunday after worship this Advent season. *Sign up on the Narthex kiosk if you'd like to bring cookies!

November 8 and 15 - Display a favorite Nativity scene in the Narthex.
November 22 - We celebrate Christ the King who comes to save us. Nativity scene blessing in worship.
November 29 - HOPE. How do we recognize God's saving work?
December 6 - PEACE. How do we prepare the way for God's saving work?
Sunday Table following worship!
December 13 - JOY. How do we recognize signs of God's presence among us?
After worship, share in **hanging the greens** and making our sanctuary ready!
December 20 - LOVE. How do we participate in God's story of salvation?

Longest Night Service – Thursday, December 17, 7 pm (in-person only)
This service makes space for difficult emotions like grief and anxiety during the holiday season. If you have lost a loved one, feel weighed down by worry, or if Christmas is a challenging season for you, this service is for you. Sanctuary opens at 6:30 pm for quiet reflection. Worship begins at 7:00 pm and includes prayer, communion, and candle lighting.



Christmas Eve Worship – Thursday, December 24 We celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Emmanuel, with carols, the Christmas story, Communion, and candle lighting!
5:00pm (in-person only) – Extended musical prelude begins at 4:45.
6:45pm – 7pm Silent Night at the Christmas Tree (in-person) – We gather on the corner of Church Street and Perrin to hear the story of Christ's birth, light candles, and sing Silent Night! Dress for the weather! The entire community is welcome! **7:30pm (in-person and livestream)** – Extended musical prelude begins at 7:10.

More Ways to Celebrate this Advent/Christmas Season!

Make a joyful noise! Would you like to add your voice (or instrument) to our Christmas Eve celebration? We are preparing special music at both **5:00pm** (new time!) and **7:30pm** worship! If you'd like to participate, sign up at https://blcfairport.org/music-sign-up/ or contact Raelynn Clare, Music Director: raelynn.clare@blcfairport.org for more information!

Poinsettia & Wreath Orders Forms are due on Sunday, December 6th
Visit https://blcfairport.org/poinsettia-sale/ to place your order for poinsettias and/or donate to our Christmas Alternate Giving option: ELCA World Hunger. Did you know one out of every 11 people — as many as 720 million — in our world are hungry? As members of the ELCA, we are called to respond. We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work. ELCA World Hunger is uniquely positioned to accompany communities in need because we work with congregations in the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as other partners and Lutheran churches overseas.

Sunday, December 13 at 10:15am: Decorate our Church Home after worship!
Grab a cup of coffee then help hang the greens, put the Chrismon ornaments on the tree, set up the nativity and otherwise help us deck our halls. Contact Donna Berner if you'd like to participate.

Angel Tree Share God's love by fulfilling a need from the Angel Tree! Look for the Angel Tree in the narthex at the beginning of December with angel tags listing the requested gift item. Take a tag (or several if you'd like), purchase the gift, wrap and affix the angel tag to the outside of the package, and bring it back to BLC. Please contact the church office if you would like a tag mailed to you.